

*The 27th July 1893.*

The following Draft Regulation which is under the consideration of the Government of His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore is published for general information, together with a Memo of Objects and Reasons.

By Order,  
C. MEENACHAIYA,  
Legislative Secretary.

## LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT.

(DRAFT)

REGULATION NO. OF 189.

### A Regulation to prevent Infant Marriages in the Territories of Mysore.

WHEREAS it is expedient to prevent Infant Marriages in the Territories of Mysore,  
His Highness the Maharaja is pleased to enact as follows:—

1. This Regulation may be called "The Mysore Infant Marriages Prevention Regulation."

(2) It shall extend to the whole of the Territories of Mysore and shall come into operation at the expiration of six months from the date of its publication in the official Gazette.

2. For the purposes of this Regulation an "Infant girl" means a girl who has not completed eight years of age; and an "Infant boy", a boy who has not completed fourteen years of age.

3. Any person who causes the marriage of an Infant girl or Infant boy, and any person who knowingly aids and abets within the meaning of the Indian Penal Code such a marriage, and any man who having completed eighteen years of age marries an Infant girl shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months or with fine, or with both.

4. Any man who having completed fifty years of age marries a girl who has not completed fourteen years of age, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years or with fine, or with both.

5. Any person who causes the marriage of a girl who has not completed fourteen years of age, with a man who has completed fifty years of age and any person who knowingly aids and abets, within the meaning of the Indian Penal Code, such a marriage, shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months or with fine, or with both.

6. No offence punishable under this Regulation shall be tried by any Court inferior to that of a Magistrate of the District.

Offences under the Regulation by whom triable.

7. No marriage which has actually taken place, shall be deemed to be invalid, on the ground of the penalties provided by this Regulation.

Validity of marriages, notwithstanding the penalties provided by the Regulation.



## MEMO.

The attention of the Government has for some time past been drawn to the important question of Infant Marriages amongst Hindus, especially amongst Brahmins and Vaisyas.

2. Instances in which the bride is a child five years old and even under, and the bridegroom hardly a year or two older are not uncommon. Cases also occur in which either through cupidity or other unworthy motives on the part of parents or other guardians, girls of very tender age, are given in marriage to old men. Such marriages cannot but be productive of most serious and sad consequences.

The increased chances of a lifelong widowhood in a country where there is a deep-rooted and inflexible opposition, to widow marriages, an opposition which stops at nothing short of a complete ostracism and social excommunication of the offending parties, must be very deplorable indeed. The physical aspect of the question is equally cheerless: Where the boy-husband and the girl-wife are still almost children at the second ceremony of consummation of marriage, it is not difficult to foresee a physical deterioration both in the present and succeeding generations. Strongly as the Government felt the need of reformation in this direction, it considered also, that any legislative action in a social matter of this kind was inexpedient until there was an indication of popular feeling in its favor. It is a matter of congratulation that such an indication has now been furnished and the circumstances which have immediately led to the framing of this Regulation are briefly stated below.

3. The Representative Members of the Dasara Assembly of 1891 pressed the question upon the attention of the Government and discussing it in all earnestness, in its various aspects, invoked legislative action. The hands of the Government being thus strengthened by this representation of the Representatives of the people, it was considered desirable to ascertain how far, if any, the Hindu Shastras encouraged or enjoined Infant Marriages. Taking advantage of the visit to Mysore of the Gurn (Spiritual Head) of the Sringeri Matt, a Council of Pandits was convened under his presidency, in which the Shastras were fully examined and discussed. The opinions of the Gurus of other leading Matts were also invited, and as a result of such investigation, the Dewan in his Dasara Address to the Representative Assembly of 1892 made the following statement:—

“Last year, you may remember, the question of prohibiting Infant Marriages and the custom of marrying young girls to old men was brought forward by you with a view to the Government taking legislative action in regard to it. In fulfilment of the promise I then made, the leading Matts have been consulted and you will be glad to hear that they are all of the opinion that both these practices under certain limits are opposed to the Shastras. Having regard to these opinions and the general popular sentiment as far as we have been able to ascertain it, it would be unwise at present to attempt more than the prohibition of the marriage of a girl below 8 years and the marriage of a man above 50 years with a girl below 16 years, which may be assumed as the age of discretion when a girl may be trusted to exercise her own independent judgment. To treat such marriages as altogether void in law would be no remedy, and will involve endless difficulties regarding legitimacy and rights of inheritance, and the utmost that can be done seems to be to visit the persons responsible for making such marriages with criminal penalties. Such a law would of course have but very limited operation, because of the very small number of marriages prohibited by it. The progressive party may not be quite pleased with so limited a measure, but the limits indicated have the sanction of the different religious heads and of public opinion and the measure would serve as a cautious initial step towards a reform wished for by the more advanced section. In thus stating to you how the question stands it is my desire that you should know what action has followed your previous representation on the subject, and what the present views of the Government are. It now rests with you carefully to consider it from all points of view and tell me what you desire to be done. You know that the moral and religious aspects of the question are grave and it behoves us to proceed with great caution.”



4. It may not be out of place here to state briefly the text of the Shastras bearing on the subject. The Shastras while laying a great stress upon the paramount importance of celebrating the marriage of girls before they attain puberty declare that the best or most approved age for marriage, is the 8th, 9th and 10th years.

ಅಷ್ಟವರ್ಷಾತ್ಪನ್ನೇಶ್ವರೇ ನವಮರ್ಷಾತುರೇಶ್ವರೇ ದಶಮವರ್ಷಾತ್ಪನ್ನೇಶ್ವರೇ ಅಥವಾ ದ್ವಂದ್ವರಜಸ್ವರಾ ||

The above passage rendered in English runs as follows :—

A girl in her 8th year is a Gauri, in her 9th year a Rohini, in her 10th year a Kanya, and above that a Rajasvala :

Then there is a text which declares the gradations of merit according to the age of the girl given in marriage.

The giving in marriage of a Gauri will lead to Nāka, of a Rohini to Vaikunta, and of a Kanya to Brahmaloaka, and a Rajasvala to Hell.

It will thus be seen from the above text, that not only the highest reward is promised for the marriage of a Kanya, but that the very term "Kanyādanam" (giving a girl in marriage) to be technically effectual must be the giving of a 'Kanya' or, a girl in her 10th year. But there is in vogue also another reading of the text quoted above, a reading the genuineness of which however, is doubted by the heads of the Mats, by which a girl in her 8th year is declared a Kanya, a Rohini in the 9th year and a Gauri in the 10th year.

The text condemning the marriage of a man after his 50th year is very explicit.

ಪಂಚಾಶದ್ವತ್ಪರಾರೋಧ್ಯಂ ನ ಕಾರ್ಯಂ ಪೂಜಾಪೂಜನಂ ಕಲೇಯುಗಗನ್ಯುದ್ಯತ್ಯಾ ಶ್ವಾಶ್ವಮಾಹುರ್ಮುನೀಷಿಃ ||

A man should not marry after his 50th year. The wise say that it should be prohibited on account of the evils of the Kaliyuga.

In November last, when His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General of India honored Mysore with a visit, a deputation from the Members of the Dasara Representative Assembly waited upon him with an address in which they referred to this question in the following terms :—

"Your Excellency will be pleased to learn that this year His Highness' Government has, in accordance with our representations, promised a measure of social reform in regard to Infant Marriages which, we are assured, cannot fail to be productive of great good to the Hindu community, both in its direct results and as an educative agency."

His Excellency, in reply, while admitting that the subject was beset with difficulties, stated—

"I shall be glad to hear that your efforts to procure a measure of reform in regard to Infant Marriages are successful."

"We feel that it is mainly to the spontaneous action of the people, whether within or without the limits of British India, that we must look for social reforms of the kind which you desire to effect."

Having given a brief sketch of the historical development of this measure, it will be necessary to say a few words about the measure itself.

The legislation in its present form is very modest indeed. It cannot fully satisfy the aspirations of ardent reformers; neither does it afford a complete and efficient remedy to the existing evils, but it is considered prudent to proceed cautiously, and to devise a measure which, while enlisting popular sympathies, and least provocation of popular prejudices, may in course of time pave the way for larger reforms.

Without going to the extent of forbidding as illegal, Infant Marriages, penalties are attached to them, fixing 8 years for a girl and 14 years for a boy as the minimum age for marriage. In a country where marriages are often celebrated when the girls are 6 or 7 years old and sometimes under, it is something as a start to fix the limit at the completion of 8 years; any higher limit, however desirable, might evoke opposition, and the object aimed at, viz., the educating of the people and the enlistment of popular sympathies might be frustrated.

The marriage of a girl under 14 years of age to a man who has completed 50 years is also made punishable and to secure efficiency of trial it is provided that offences under this Regulation should not be tried by Courts inferior to that of a District Magistrate.



No. 112 (Revenue), dated India Office, London, the 10th November 1892.

From—The Right Honourable the EARL OF KIMBERLEY, K. G., Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India.

To—His Excellency the Most Honourable the Governor General of India in Council.

I forward, for the information of Your Excellency's Government, a memorial\* from Dr. Augustus Mueller, concerning the expediency of introducing into India his method of treating snake-bites by injection of strychnine.

\* Memorial, dated 6th September 1892.

2. In September 1890 Dr. Mueller addressed my predecessor, through His Excellency Lord Hopetoun and the Colonial Office, on the subject of his remedy for the bite of poisonous snakes. It appeared that Lord Hopetoun had at the same time addressed your Government on the matter, and therefore no action was taken here. Dr. Mueller claims that the success of his treatment has been widely admitted in Australia, and he quotes cases (reported on page 1183 of the London *Lancet* for 28th May, 1892) in which Dr. Bannerjee of Pachbhadra in Rajputana tried the strychnine treatment with complete success on six occasions.

3. Sir Joseph Fayrer, whose interest in the subject is well known, advises me that an antidote, supported in this way by the positive assertion of a man of science like Dr. Mueller, ought to be tried, though he adds that his own experience does not warrant an expectation that the antidote will be successful in the case of the *Najidæ*.

4. I gather from the Home Department Proceedings of your Government, for the months of September 1890 and May 1892, that you intended to have Dr. Mueller's method tested in Bengal, but that for different reasons the experiments were not carried out.

5. Seeing that the mortality from snake-bite in India is very large, I commend to your Government the suggestion that careful trials of Dr. Mueller's methods should be held under the supervision of a competent medical committee in Calcutta, and also at selected hospitals like Dr. Bannerjee's at Pachbhadra.

ENCLOSURE.

To Her Most Gracious Majesty Victoria, by the Grace of God, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and Empress of India.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY.—The undersigned, who doing a career of 37 years in Australia has made snake-poison his special study, who has succeeded in constructing the first irrefutable scientific theory of its action, and guided by that theory has discovered in strychnine, administered in large doses by hypodermic injections, an infallible antidote to snake poison, seeing the great mortality from snake-bite among your Majesty's Indian subjects, and being perfectly confident that this lamentable loss of human life can be greatly reduced by the introduction of his treatment, which has been universally adopted in Australia, most humbly prays for Your Majesty's gracious intercession and powerful aid in bringing about and hastening on this most desirable consummation. His reasons for approaching Your Majesty on this subject are as follows:—

1. Your Majesty's Indian Government has been twice appealed to in vain, first by letters addressed by the undersigned to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India and His Excellency the Viceroy of India respectively, and forwarded through His Excellency the Governor of Victoria, and a second time by a letter from His Excellency the Governor of New South Wales to His Excellency the Viceroy of India, written at the special request of the Honourable Dr. Creed, Editor of the *Australian Medical Gazette*.
2. The Calcutta medical authorities, to whom the subject had necessarily to be referred by His Excellency the Viceroy of India, have declined to move in the matter, alleging as their reason the unfavorable results of certain experiments made years ago with snake poison and strychnine on dogs,—results which, as the writer will show presently, are most fallacious and misleading when applied to men. Nevertheless, the Calcutta authorities have resolved to subject the well and amply proven value of the strychnine treatment on man once more to the test of experiments on animals, more especially dogs, and are apparently labouring under the delusion that this test will be final.



3. This ill-advised course emanates from the erroneous idea that the effects of snake poison and strychnine are identical on dog and man, whereas this supposed identity amounts only to an imperfect analogy. A dog under the influence of snake poison, counteracted by a corresponding quantity of strychnine, is very apt to be thrown into violent and fatal convulsions, unless the antidote is most carefully administered, —in fact, even the snake poison alone usually produces convulsions in dogs, and these are aggravated by strychnine injected both in too small or too large a quantity. It is only when by a lucky chance the exact quantity required is administered to a dog, that he will pass scatheless through the ordeal. In man, on the other hand, convulsions are of rare occurrence. Even when strychnine has been required in doses and quantities that would be absolutely fatal in the absence of the counter-acting ophidian venom, convulsions are never ushered in violently as in dogs, but are always preceded by harmless spasms about the neck and face, which are looked for as a signal that the snake poison is conquered, and the antidote for the time being no longer required. It is only when this signal is disregarded and the strychnine injections are continued that tetanic convulsions set in, but they are never as in dogs, and usually pass away quickly.

Your Majesty will have no difficulty in drawing your own conclusions from these facts, and will probably agree with the writer when he asserts that experiments on animals are not only misleading, but also totally uncalled for with regard to the strychnine treatment of snake-bite on man. Its efficacy has now been so thoroughly proven by a severe two years' test at the hands of medical men in all parts of Australia, and even laymen have in emergency cases administered it with so much success, that the proposal to revert it once more to test-experiments on animals, which have always been the bane of research on this subject, is simply ridiculous.

There is no reason to doubt that the writer's treatment will be as successful in India as it is in Australia. In the *Lancet* of the 26th of May last, Dr. Bannerjee, Medical Officer at Pachbhadra Salt Mines, Rajputana, has published seven cases of viper and krait bite treated by him in his hospital with strychnine injections. Some of the persons were in an apparently hopeless state when admitted, but all were discharged cured within a week.

Brilliant results like these must necessarily pave the way for the general adoption of the treatment in India, but this process will be a slow one if left to itself, and still more so if retarded by experiments on animals. Vigorous measures on the part of the authorities are required to stem the fatal tide that now flows at the rate of two millions of human beings in a century. Of the twenty-two thousand that perished last year again, many, no doubt, would have been saved if the writer's appeal to the authorities had not been left unheeded. In this appeal good and sufficient reasons were given to justify the authorities in issuing circulars making strychnine injections in cases of snake-bite compulsory. Cases containing antidote hypodermic syringe and directions for use, together with a stout ligature to apply above the bite and a sharp pair of scissors to cut out the bitten skin, such as are now being sold in large quantities in Australia, might also have been given with perfect safety into the hands of one or two officials in every village, to be available where medical aid is not quickly enough procurable. Your Majesty's Indian subjects are unfortunately not in the position to protect themselves against their insidious enemies, the snakes, as has been done by the Australian colonists, especially in the sparsely populated interior, where no settlement hardly is now without its antidote case, and it therefore devolves on Your Majesty's Indian Government to initiate the measures here indicated.

Your Majesty's long and beneficent reign has been marked by numerous acts on your Majesty's part that will ever shed a bright lustre around Your Majesty's throne. To this "royal diadem of noble deeds" another gem may now be added by Your Majesty bestowing the great boon of comparative immunity from snake-bite on your Indian subjects. Even now, whilst scores of animals are being tortured uselessly at Calcutta, thousands of Your Majesty's Indian subjects, entrusted by Divine Providence to Your Majesty's care, are again perishing from snake-bite. One word from Your Majesty, one single exercise of your royal authority, can save thousands of human lives. It would be high treason to doubt for a moment that this word will be spoken by Your Majesty readily and joyfully. To overcome official perverseness and prejudice now standing in the way, Your Majesty's personal intervention is necessary. To assure Your Majesty that it can be granted not only with perfect safety, but also with absolute certainty of success, it is only necessary to refer to Dr. Bannerjee's cases. They were bites inflicted by *Bungarus caeruleus*, a deadly colubrine snake, and, next to the cobra, the most destructive to human life, and *Echis carinata*, an equally deadly viper. Dr. Bannerjee administered the antidote boldly, giving as much as three and four grains of strychnine to one person, and, when discharging his patients cured within a few days, could not detect a trace of either of the two powerful poisons in them, both having neutralised each other and been thrown out of the system. Even a larger quantity of the antidote will be required to cope successfully with desperate cases of cobra-bites, but the victory of the antidote is assured in every case in which it is administered in Dr. Bannerjee's fearless manner, irregardless of the quantity that may be required of it.

The importance and urgency of this subject must be the writer's excuse for infringing so largely on Your Majesty's time. Now that the snake season has again commenced in India, more than one hundred persons are perishing every day in Your Majesty's Indian dominions



from snake-bite. Thousands of these may yet be saved if Your Majesty orders vigorous action on the lines laid down in this letter to be taken at once.

May the wisdom and the benevolence that characterize all Your Majesty's actions also guide Your Majesty in this important matter, involving the life or death of thousands of Your Majesty's subjects. This is the firm trust and the devout prayer of

YACHANDANDAH (VICTORIA), }  
The 6th September 1892. }

Your Majesty's loyal and humble subject,  
AUGUSTUS MUELLER, M. D.

Dated Yachandandah (Victoria), the 22nd December 1892.

From—DR. A. MUELLER,

To—The Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, Calcutta.

I have the honor to inform you that in a despatch, dated 10th November last, which His Excellency the Governor of Victoria has received from the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and of which His Excellency has caused copy to be forwarded to me with regard to a memorial addressed by me to Her Majesty the Queen, praying for the introduction of the strychnine treatment of snake-bite in India, it has been intimated to His Excellency that any suggestions I may deem it advisable to make with regard to the contemplated trials of my method in India, may be forwarded by me direct to you.

Following out this intimation at the advice of His Excellency, I have now the honor to suggest—

- (1) That experiments on the lower animals with snake poison and strychnine should be altogether dispensed with, since the motornerve-centres of these animals (dogs, cats, guineapigs, etc.) frequently break down under the combined influence of the two poisons, and thus misleading results are obtained.
- (2) That in the case of a human being manifesting the symptoms produced by snake poison, the strychnine should be injected regardless of the total quantity of it that may be required to subdue these symptoms; and that in the event of their returning after a shorter or longer interval, the antidote should again be resorted to.
- (3) That the doses of the latter should never be less than one-tenth of a grain, increased in urgent cases to one-sixth and even one-fourth of a grain, and repeated every 15 or 20 minutes, until the symptoms of snake poison are removed.
- (4) That in certain very acute cases of snake-bite caused by one or both poison fangs having perforated into a vein, the hypodermic method of injection might with advantage be exchanged for the extravenuous one, the antidote thus poured into the bloodstream in large doses and at short intervals being capable of turning the scale of life in favour of persons when already pulseless at wrists and having ceased to breathe, more especially if assisted by artificial respiration.
- (5) That the effect of strychnine when used as an antidote to snake poison is not cumulative, as it is when otherwise administered, and that even when muscular spasms or slight convulsions supervene in the course of the treatment, they are always harmless and can be easily subdued.
- (6) That on the other hand the snake poison, when only partially subdued by an insufficient use of the antidote, overpowers the motornerve-centres often very insidiously, as soon as the effect of the antidote has worn off, and that therefore the danger of the strychnine treatment lies not in too free but too sparing a use of strychnine. Wherever this drug is freely and fearlessly injected, both the viperine and colubrine poison must necessarily yield to it in all ordinary cases of snake-bite in India.

Trusting that these suggestions, which, if carefully observed, will ensure the success of the treatment, may be freely circulated.

## Prices-Current (Retail) of Food Grains, Firewood and Salt in the Province of Mysore during the Fortnight ending the 15th July 1893.

Quantity per Rupee by the Standard Sars of 80 Tols, vide Government of India No. 1-21, dated 10th February 1874.

District.	No.	WHEAT.			BARLEY.			RICE, BEST SORT.			RICE, COMMON.			JAVAR OR CHOLAR, Sorghum Vulgare.			BATA OR KANAU, Pteridium typhol. detm.		
		Present return.	Next preceding return.	Corresponding re- turn of last year.	Present return.	Next preceding return.	Corresponding re- turn of last year.	Present return.	Next preceding return.	Corresponding re- turn of last year.	Present return.	Next preceding return.	Corresponding re- turn of last year.	Present return.	Next preceding return.	Corresponding re- turn of last year.	Present return.	Next preceding return.	Corresponding re- turn of last year.
1 Bangalore	10	6	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7
2 Kolar	9	4	8	4	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7
3 Tumkur	9	4	8	4	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7
4 Mysore	9	4	8	4	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7
5 Hassan	9	4	8	4	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7
6 Shimoga	10	6	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7
7 Kolar	11	6	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7
8 Chitaldroog	11	6	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7
Average	9	6	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7	8	10	7

15th July 1893.

Quantity per Rupee by the Standard Sars of 80 Tols, vide Government of India No. 1-21, dated 10th February 1874.

District.	No.	MARRA OR NAGI, Eleusine Coracana.			KANGRI OR KARUS, Italian millet (Setaria Italica).			GRAM, CHENNA, CHOLA KADALS OR SUSAGA, Cicer Aridinum.			INDIAN CORN OR MAIZE (Zea Mays).			AGHAR OF THUR CADIAN, Pea (Legu- mina Indica).			FIREWOOD.			SALT.		
		Present return.	Next preceding return.	Corresponding re- turn of last year.	Present return.	Next preceding return.	Corresponding re- turn of last year.	Present return.	Next preceding return.	Corresponding re- turn of last year.	Present return.	Next preceding return.	Corresponding re- turn of last year.	Present return.	Next preceding return.	Corresponding re- turn of last year.	Present return.	Next preceding return.	Corresponding re- turn of last year.	Present return.	Next preceding return.	Corresponding re- turn of last year.
1 Bangalore	20	9	22	10	17	8	20	10	24	11	10	24	11	10	24	11	10	24	11	10	24	11
2 Kolar	24	0	25	0	26	0	27	0	28	0	29	0	30	0	31	0	32	0	33	0	34	0
3 Tumkur	25	0	25	0	26	0	27	0	28	0	29	0	30	0	31	0	32	0	33	0	34	0
4 Mysore	25	0	25	0	26	0	27	0	28	0	29	0	30	0	31	0	32	0	33	0	34	0
5 Hassan	25	0	25	0	26	0	27	0	28	0	29	0	30	0	31	0	32	0	33	0	34	0
6 Shimoga	34	10	34	10	38	10	42	10	46	10	50	10	54	10	58	10	62	10	66	10	70	10
7 Kolar	34	10	34	10	38	10	42	10	46	10	50	10	54	10	58	10	62	10	66	10	70	10
8 Chitaldroog	36	0	36	0	37	0	38	0	39	0	40	0	41	0	42	0	43	0	44	0	45	0
Average	28	12	29	0	21	3	28	11	28	11	28	11	28	11	28	11	28	11	28	11	28	11

15th July 1893.

R. V. LAYNE, Rao.